

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 1-3 and 18-20 without restriction. In this regard, in response to the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of claims in the present application. That is, while Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, Applicants submit that each of the claims in the present application recite a particular combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of each of these claims is based on the totality of the particular features recited therein.

Applicants would also like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 11-12 and 16-17, if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the above-referenced Office Action, claims 7-10 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. Claims 4 and 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over KILLIAN (U.S. Patent No. 5,940,394) in view of BLANCHET et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0013130). Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over KILLIAN in view of BLANCHET et al., and further in view of MATSUHIRA (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0088697). Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over KILLIAN in view of BLANCHET et al., and further in view of NESSET et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,055,236). Claims 13 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McDYSAN (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0115480) in view of KILLIAN, and further in further

view of BLANCHET et al. Claim 14 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McDYSAN in view of KILLIAN in view of BLANCHET et al., and further in view of MATSUHIRA.

As noted above, claims 1-3 and 18-20 were indicated to be allowable without restriction, and claims 11-12 and 16-17 were indicated to be allowable if rewritten to independent form to include all of the features of the base and any intervening claims.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 4, 11, 13 and 16 will have been canceled, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. New claims 21-23 have been submitted for consideration. Claims 5-7 and 12 will have been amended to depend from new claim 21. Claim 14-15 will have been amended to depend from new claim 23. Claim 17 will have been amended to depend from new claim 22. Claims 3, 5-10, 12, 14-15, 17-18 and 20 will also have been amended to correct claim noted informalities and to more clearly recite features of the invention to which these claims are directed.

With respect to the rejection of claims 7-10 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, the Office Action asserted that the term “optional header” reflects intended use and therefore is indefinite because it is not clear whether the optional header will be present or not present. Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 7-10 and 15 will have been amended to delete reference to the term “optional.” Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is moot and should thus be withdrawn.

With respect to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 and objections to claims 11-12 and 16-17, the cancellation of claims 4, 11, 13 and 16 renders the rejections of claims 4 and 13 and the objections-to claims 11 and 16 moot. Accordingly, Applicants

respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of claims 4 and 13 and the objection to claims 11 and 16.

New independent claim 21 includes features similar to features of the combination of cancelled claims 4 and 11. Independent claim 22 is directed to an “interface device” as opposed to a “system”, and includes features similar to features of the combination of cancelled claims 13 and 16. Claim 23, which depends from claim 22, is directed to features of a second interface device verifying a VPN identification number, which is similar to a feature originally recited in canceled claim 13. Claims 21-22 are believed to be allowable at least in view of the previous indication of the allowability of claims 11 and 16. Claims 5-10, 12, 14-15, 17 and 23 are each believed to be allowable at least for depending, directly or indirectly, from an allowable independent claim, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

Accordingly, each of the outstanding rejections of claims 4-10 and 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. §103 and each of the objections to claims 11-12 and 16-17 has been rendered moot by the herein-contained cancellation of claims 4, 11, 13 and 16, by the amendments to claims 5-7, 12, 14-15 and 17, and by the existing dependency of claims 8-10.

The cancellation of claims 4, 11, 13 and 16, and the amendments to claims 3, 5-10, 12, 14-15, 17-18 and 20 should not be considered an indication of Applicants’ acquiescence as to the propriety of any outstanding rejection. Rather, claims 4, 11, 13 and 16 will have been cancelled and claims 3, 5-10, 12, 14-15, 17-18 and 20 will have been amended in order to advance prosecution and obtain early allowance of claims.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of each of the objections and rejections set forth

in the Office Action of April 4, 2007, together with an indication of the allowability of all pending claims, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is believed to be appropriate and proper.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attached thereto.

Should an extension of time be necessary to maintain the pendency of this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee to Deposit Account No. 19-0089. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Weijing CHEN et al.

Joshua M. Povsner  
Reg. #42,086

Bruce H. Bernstein  
Reg. No. 29,027

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.  
1950 Roland Clarke Place]  
Reston, VA 20191  
(703) 716-119112